

Civil Rights Leaders Decry Chokehold Decision



Yasmin Harrell, left, and Atiya Elliott-Semper hold signs while demonstrating with others in Atlanta on Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014 against the deaths of two unarmed black men at the hands of white police officers in New York City and Ferguson, Mo.

(AP Photo/David Goldman)

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Civil Rights Leaders Decry Chokehold Decision

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Civil rights leaders Thursday decried the grand jury decision not to charge a white New York City police officer in the chokehold death of a black man and announced plans for a march and a summit on racial justice in Washington later this month.

The case of Eric Garner — combined with the decision by a grand jury last week not to charge the white officer who shot and killed unarmed black 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri — stirred a national conversation about race, police training and the grand jury process.

Unlike Brown's shooting, Garner's arrest was captured on videotape.

A day after protests erupted in New York over the decision not to charge a white officer in the death of a black man, civil rights leaders pinned their hopes on a federal investigation. Demonstrators turned out in such cities as Denver, Detroit and Minneapolis. And politicians and others talked about better police training, body cameras and changes in the grand jury process to restore faith in the legal system.

Amid the tensions, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder presented the results of an investigation into police in the Ohio city of Cleveland, prompted by several highly publicized police encounters, some of them deadly. The Justice Department report said Cleveland police use excessive and unnecessary force far too often, are poorly trained in tactics and firearm use and endanger the public and their fellow officers with their recklessness.

The results of the investigation came just one week after hundreds of people blocked a Cleveland freeway to protest the Garner and Brown killings, along with the fatal shooting of a black 12-year-old boy by a white officer outside a Cleveland recreation center. Police said the officer thought the boy was holding a firearm,

but he actually had an air-soft gun that shoots nonlethal plastic pellets.

In New York, National Urban League President Marc Morial said the lack of an indictment in Garner's death was "a travesty of justice."

About 20 civil rights leaders met behind closed doors Thursday at the New York City headquarters of Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network. Sharpton, one of the country's most outspoken civil rights activists, said a civil rights summit will be held following a Dec. 13 march in Washington.

Garner, 43, died as officers were attempting to arrest him for selling untaxed cigarettes on the street.

The video, shot by an onlooker and widely viewed on the Internet, showed Garner telling a group of police officers to leave him alone as they tried to arrest him.

Officer Daniel Pantaleo responded by wrapping his arm around Garner's neck in what appeared to be a chokehold, which is banned under the New York Police Department's policy.

The heavyset Garner, who had asthma, was heard repeatedly gasping, "I can't breathe!" He later died at a hospital.

Thousands of people protested in New York, chant-



Protesters rally against a grand jury's decision not to indict the police officer involved in the death of Eric Garner in Foley Square, Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014, in New York. A grand jury cleared a white New York City police officer Wednesday in the videotaped chokehold death of Garner, an unarmed black man, who had been stopped on suspicion of selling loose, untaxed cigarettes. (AP Photo/Jason DeCrow)

ing and blocking traffic, after the grand jury decided not to bring charges against Pantaleo. The deci-

sion Wednesday came a week after a Missouri grand jury made a similar ruling in Brown's case.

Police said 83 people were arrested in New York, mostly on disorderly conduct charges. □



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US House rebukes Obama on immigration orders



House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio meets with reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014. Just days before government funding expires, House Republican leaders are trying to strike a balance between the conservatives determined to stop President Barack Obama's immigration order and other lawmakers just as determined to avoid another politically damaging shutdown.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)



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ERICA WERNER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Emboldened Republicans issued a stern but symbolic rebuke to President Barack Obama over immigration Thursday, passing a bill in the House of Representatives declaring his executive actions to curb deportations “null and void and without legal effect.”

Even as emotions ran high in debate on the bill, many involved acknowledged it was mostly a sideshow as Republicans struggled to find some way to undo what Obama has done — not just register their disapproval. Party leaders acknowledged their options were limited given Obama's veto power, and no clear solution beckoned, even as Republicans prepare to take full control of Congress in January after sweeping last month's congressional elections.

Outraged Democrats, immigrant advocates and the White House said Republicans were voting to tear families apart and eject parents. Obama's executive actions last month will extend deportation relief and work permits to some 4 million immigrants here illegally, mostly those who have been in the country more than five years and have children who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents. He also re-ordered law enforcement priorities and expanded an existing deportation deferral program for immigrants brought illegally as kids.

“Rather than deport students and separate families and make it harder for law enforcement to do its job, I just want the Congress to work with us to pass a commonsense law to fix that broken immigration system,” Obama said ahead of the vote.

Even the bill's supporters acknowledged that the bill, which says Obama was acting “without any constitutional or statutory basis,” was mostly meant to send a message. It was part of a two-part strategy by House Republican leadership to appease conservative im-

migration hardliners without risking a government shutdown. After gaining control of the Senate and adding to their majority in the House, Republicans pledged they would prove to Americans that they were ready to govern, not just obstruct the president. Yet a bigger battle might lie ahead as conservatives push to use must-pass spending legislation to block Obama.

Republicans hoped that after approving the bill, the party would move on next week to vote on legislation to keep most of the government running for a year, with a shorter timeframe for the Homeland Security Department, which oversees immigration. The idea is to revisit Homeland Security early next year when Republicans will control both houses at the Capitol and have more leverage. The current government-funding measure expires Dec. 11 so a new one must pass by then.

But that approach doesn't go far enough for some immigration hardliners, goaded on by outside conservative groups that donate massive amounts of money to candidates and tea party-aligned senators including Ted Cruz of Texas. They say the only real way to stop Obama is to include language in the upcoming spending bill to block any money for his actions on immigration.

Republican leaders fear such spending-bill language could court an Obama veto and even a government shutdown. That's something they're determined to avoid, a year after taking a political hit for provoking a 16-day partial shutdown in an unsuccessful attempt to overturn Obama's health care law.

Democratic lawmakers rallied behind the president Thursday, and immigrant advocates warned Republicans would be alienating Latinos heading into 2016 presidential elections in which the rapidly growing Hispanic vote is expected to be significant. □

Crews break up California homeless encampment

MARTHA MENDOZA

AP National Writer

SAN JOSE, California (AP)

— About 50 muddy souls dragged their meager belongings out of a trash-strewn California creek bed Thursday as police and social-service workers began clearing away one of the nation's largest homeless encampments, a collection of flimsy tents and plywood shelters in the heart of Silicon Valley. The people forced out of the camp known as the Jungle ended up alongside a busy road that startled passers-by who slowed down to watch.

"People drive by and look at us like we're circus animals," said a sobbing Nancy Ortega.

More than 30 police officers and dozens of construction workers in white hazmat suits joined about 15 social-service workers in the effort to take apart the treacherous community that at its peak housed as many as 350 people living in squalor just a short drive from tech giants Google, Apple, Yahoo and eBay.

For months, social workers have been trying to house camp residents. And four days earlier, they were warned they had until dawn Thursday to leave or face arrest for trespassing. Still, city officials estimated about 60 people remained at the filthy site when clean-out day came.

After a rainy night, skies cleared Thursday, and one person after another in varying states of mental clarity and sobriety dragged their belongings in suitcases, shopping carts and on bicycles out of the camp through ankle-deep sludge. By midmorning, dozens had reached the sidewalk, abandoning most of their possessions.

A few dozen protesters gathered at the site holding signs reading "Homeless people matter" and "Stand with The Jungle."

The encampment stands in stark contrast to the surrounding valley, a region that leads the country in job growth, income and venture capital.

Officials found shelter for about 10 residents Thursday, said San Jose homelessness response manager Ray Bramson. Many more refused the city's offers, citing concerns about safety at homeless shelters, their need to stay with pets and their dislike of sobriety rules. Several homeless-assistance groups also stepped in to help. HomeFirst, the largest provider to homeless people in the county, set aside 27 beds at a nearby shelter. Another 50 beds are open in a separate cold-weather shelter. San Jose has spent more than \$4 million over the last year and a half to solve problems at the encampment and has housed some 135 people from the site. □



Crews begin the clean up process at a homeless encampment known as The Jungle Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014, in San Jose, Calif. Police and social-workers on Thursday began clearing away one of the nation's largest homeless encampments, a cluster of flimsy tents and plywood shelters that once housed more than 200 people in the heart of California's wealthy Silicon Valley.

(AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)



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LL Bean struggles to meet demand for iconic boot

DAVID SHARP
Associated Press

LEWISTON, Maine (AP) — Whether it's "lumberjack chic" or old-school utility, demand for L.L. Bean boots is surging — so much so that some customers will

process of hiring 100 workers and purchasing additional equipment to catch up with demand. "We just can't make enough of them," said Tom Armstrong, L.L. Bean's chief merchandising officer.

top 500,000. That growth has outpaced even the company's aggressive expectations, Armstrong said. But it's difficult to say exactly what's boosting demand — popularity on college cam-

produced," said Royce Haines, L.L. Bean's operations manager, who oversees Bean's shoemaking operations.

L.L. Bean is adding a third shift this weekend at its leather-sewing operation in Brunswick, which joins an operation that makes rubber soles in Lewiston that's already working around the clock.

In the coming year, the company is also hiring 100 workers to bring the shoemaking operation to 500 workers and spending \$1 million to purchase a second injection-molding machine like one that's currently in use in Lewiston. But the production boost won't happen overnight because it takes up to six months to get new workers fully trained.

L.L. Bean is an enviable position with its boots because price-conscious young consumers are willing to pay for the original heritage item as opposed to a knockoff, much like the growing demand for original Sperry Top-Siders, said Marshal Cohen, chief industry analyst at market researcher NPD Group.

"You've got the younger consumer jumping all over

it like they just discovered it but the boomer generation has been wearing it for all their lives. So you're getting growth from the top and the bottom of the age spectrum," he said.

Bean's boot is a rare success story for domestic shoe making. Other well-known brands like G.H. Bass, Cole Haan, Sebago and Dexter long ago moved their production out of Maine in search of cheaper labor. Nationwide, the number of shoe-manufacturing jobs dropped from more than 200,000 in the 1970s to about 14,000 last year, according to the U.S. Labor Department. Many of L.L. Bean's products are now made overseas as well, but the family-owned company has insisted on keeping production of its iconic boot in Maine.

L.L. Bean's familiar boot started with the original "Maine hunting shoe" first produced by Leon Leonard Bean in 1912. These days, the company has two giant "L.L. Bean Bootmobiles" that travel the country to promote the brand, and tourists pose for photos next to a giant boot outside flagship store in Freeport, Maine. □



Talitha Donaldson displays a label that is glued onto the back of every L.L. Bean boot, at a facility in Lewiston, Maine. The Maine-based retailer can't make enough of its iconic boots to keep up with demand this holiday season. Some styles are on back order until February, and the company is answering by hiring more than 100 workers and purchasing a new machine that makes the rubber soles. (AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty)

have to wait until February to get their holiday purchases.

A backlog of 60,000 boot orders could grow to 100,000 by month's end, and the company is in the

The rubber-bottomed, leather-topped "duck boot" has seen sales grow from fewer than 100,000 a decade ago to about 450,000 this year. Next year, the number is expected to

puses, new styles including bright colors or the plaid-and-boots style dubbed "lumberjack chic." "Whatever is driving it is making us happy. We're scurrying to get them

Canada approves Burger King-Tim Hortons takeover

TORONTO (AP) — Burger King Worldwide Inc.'s takeover of the Canadian coffee and doughnut

shop chain Tim Hortons Inc. was approved by the Canadian government Thursday, bringing it one

step closer to completion. Burger King, which is based in Miami but controlled by a Brazilian pri-

vate equity fund, agreed in August to buy Tim Hortons in a friendly cash-and-stock deal worth more than \$10.5 billion (CA\$12 billion). The merger of the two companies would create the world's third-largest quick service restaurant company, with more than 18,000 restaurants in 100 countries.

As part of the deal signed by Canada's Industry Minister James Moore, Burger King agreed to maintain the existing employment levels at Tim Hortons franchises across Canada and expand in the U.S. and globally faster than planned as part of the approval.

The combined company will establish its headquarters in Oakville, Ontario, where Tim Hortons

is currently based, and "maintain significant employment levels" at the office.

Critics had warned the takeover could mean layoffs and cost-cutting for Tim Hortons. A study from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives suggested the debt financing required could force Tim Hortons to lay off more than 700 employees.

The merged company will list on the Toronto Stock Exchange and Tim Hortons will remain a distinct chain from Burger King in the U.S. and Canada.

The deal still requires shareholder approval. Tim Hortons shareholders are expected to vote on the proposal at a special meeting on Dec. 9. □

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US Financial Front:

GlaxoSmithKline cutting hundreds of American jobs

LINDA A. JOHNSON
AP Business Writer

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — Hundreds of British drugmaker GlaxoSmithKline's 17,000 U.S.-based employees will lose their jobs by the end of next year under the pharmaceutical industry's latest restructuring.

GlaxoSmithKline PLC, best known for its widely used asthma inhaler Advair, is making changes worldwide that are meant to produce about \$1.6 billion in annual savings within about three years —from units including research and development, manufacturing, sales and marketing, and support functions.

The company also had considered selling off or otherwise divesting its European and U.S. established products, drugs that have lost patent protection and face cheaper generic competition. On Thursday, it issued a brief statement saying that after reviewing all the bids it received, it decided not to divest those medicines because that would not maximize shareholder value.

The restructuring plan was announced on Oct. 22, when the company reported third-quarter results that included a 13 percent drop in global sales and a 62 percent plunge in net income. Details of the restructuring began emerging as GlaxoSmithKline on Wednesday started informing U.S. staff of specific plans. In a statement, the company said it will eliminate about 900 jobs in marketing and research in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, though some cuts will be made through a hiring freeze and not filling vacant positions. Some positions will be shifted to the company's U.S. headquarters in the Phila-

delphia area.

About 450 of the 900 employees losing jobs in research and development

provides contract research, consulting and other services to pharmaceutical companies.



This photo shows drugmaker GlaxoSmithKline's headquarters in London. Hundreds of GlaxoSmithKline's 17,000 U.S.-based employees will lose their jobs by the end of 2015 under the pharmaceutical industry's latest restructuring.

(AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)

at Research Triangle Park will be offered positions at Parexel International Corp., which has offices nearby in Durham, North Carolina. It

In addition, hundreds of sales and marketing jobs will be eliminated, in Philadelphia, Research Triangle Park and among sales rep-

resentatives around the U.S. Glaxo's U.S. shares fell 82 cents, or 1.8 percent, to close at \$45.89 in trading Thursday.

The moves are being made to streamline the company, part of an industrywide trend to adjust to pressures including rising research costs, government and private health plans holding down and even reducing what they'll pay for medicines, and the expiration of patents on drugs that had generated billions in annual sales. GlaxoSmithKline, the world's sixth-biggest drugmaker by revenue, said in October that while some parts of the company are growing, sales fell by 10 percent in the U.S. and by 2 percent in Europe, two of its biggest markets. Sales of Glaxo's medicines for respiratory disorders— the com-

pany's biggest franchise — have been particularly hurt, with sales of Advair down 24 percent in the U.S. over the first nine months of the year.

Glaxo's worsening financial picture comes despite a strong run of 10 new drug approvals in the U.S. over the past 18 months. Those include a once-weekly Type 2 diabetes treatment called Tanzeum, the combo HIV pill Trumeq and new inhalers for asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, plus six major approvals in 2013 of drugs for cancer, flu, respiratory disease and HIV.

The company said it is unsure how many employees will be affected by the U.S. layoffs, but some of those affected will be offered the chance to transfer to another job. □

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These American Retailers Could Use Some Holiday Cheer

A. D'INNOCENZIO

AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The holiday shopping season is always a make-or-break period for struggling retailers. But this year, the fight to grab shoppers has intensified, making it difficult for stores to use the season that accounts for about 20 percent of the retail industry's annual sales to bounce back. Stores face cautious shop-

He expects fourth-quarter earnings for the 123 retailers he tracks will rise 7.7 percent, down from a projected 16 percent increase in June.

Here, four retailers with years of sales declines that could use a good holiday season:

SEARS HOLDINGS CORP.

The problems: The Hoffman, Illinois-based company, which operates Kmart

In the first three quarters of the year, Sears has lost \$1.6 billion.

It's on track to lose money for four straight years and record eight straight years of falling revenue when it reports its annual results early next year.

The fix: To raise money, Lampert is closing weak stores, cutting inventory and selling assets to raise cash to keep the company afloat. Year-to-date, the

assets and stores to prop up its operations.

Sozzi believes that by 2017, the company will operate about 900 stores, half its current size.

The financial maneuvers "are basically enabling (Sears) to tread water on the operating losses," said Everscore ISI's Greg Melich.

RADIOSHACK CORP.

The problems: Long known as a destination for bat-

part of its debt with lenders. The fix: RadioShack's turnaround efforts have included cutting costs, renovating and closing stores, and shuffling management. The Fort Worth, Texas-based company has tried to update its image and work on adding new products, including private brands and exclusive items.

RadioShack disclosed plans in March that it intended to close 1,100 stores, or about a fifth of its U.S. locations. It didn't specify the number of job cuts.

The prospects: RadioShack has been fighting with its lenders during the holidays, which is hampering its efforts to restructure the business and close some of its stores to help raise cash. This week the lenders notified RadioShack of alleged breaches to a \$250 million loan and want the company to prepay some of its debt, along with other fees. RadioShack says that is unreasonable.

"I think they're going to close, but it's about doing it on an orderly basis," says David Tawil, co-founder and portfolio manager of Maglan Capital, which follows distressed companies.

J.C. PENNEY CO.

The problems: J.C. Penney is still trying to recover from a botched transformation plan spearheaded by former CEO Ron Johnson that sent its sales in a freefall and resulted in mounting losses.

Mike Ullman returned to the CEO job in April 2013 and has stabilized the business by restoring discounts and basic merchandise. But it's now up to Marvin Ellison, who will take over Ullman's job in August, to remake it as a shopping destination. The fix: In October, Ullman laid out a strategy to improve productivity, expand e-commerce and spruce up some departments that it said would boost sales to \$14.5 billion by fiscal 2017. That's still well below the \$17.23 billion it generated before the sales plunge. It remains to be seen whether it will further pare down its fleet, which totals about 1,100 stores. □



A man dressed as Santa Claus greets shoppers outside the J.C. Penney store at the Glendale Galleria shopping mall in Glendale, Calif. J.C. Penney is still trying to recover from a botched up transformation plan spearheaded by its former CEO Ron Johnson that sent its sales in a freefall and resulted in mounting losses.

(AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

pers who are juggling stagnant wages and higher costs for food and health care. And Web-savvy customers are using information easily available on their smartphones to hold out for ever-better deals. All of that means that stores have had to discount more — and earlier — this holiday shopping season.

"If you're a retailer on the edge, it's harder to maintain your viability and return to profitability because of the intense promotional environment," said Ken Perkins, president of RetailMetrics LLC., a retail research firm.

and Sears, has been struggling for years as it faces increasingly stiff competition from Wal-Mart, Target and Home Depot. Critics say Sears has failed to update shabby and tired stores.

Billionaire hedge fund manager Edward Lampert, now chairman and CEO, combined Sears and Kmart in 2005, about two years after he helped bring Kmart out of bankruptcy. But that merger hasn't been successful, and the company's financial results keep worsening.

The company on Thursday said its revenue fell 13 percent in the third quarter.

company has closed 129 stores and for the full year it expects to close a total of 235 stores. That's resulting in several thousand job cuts. At the same time, Sears says it is shifting its focus from running a store network to operating an online and offline business tied together by its Shop Your Way loyalty program. The prospects: Brian Sozzi, CEO and chief equities strategist at Belus Capital Advisors, says crowds at both chains were thin over the Thanksgiving weekend. And the latest third-quarter results will likely make it critical for Sears to keep selling

teries and obscure electronic parts, RadioShack's problem has been that the functions of so many products it sold have been taken up by smartphones. So it sought to remake itself as a specialist in wireless devices and accessories. But growth in that business is slowing because more people have smartphones and see fewer reasons to upgrade. RadioShack's shares are now trading below \$1. It warned in September that it might need to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, which wasn't unexpected. It bought some more time soon after by restructuring



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US calls on Russia to calm turbulence in Ukraine



US Secretary of State John Kerry, left, and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov gesture prior to a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) ministerial meeting in Basel, Switzerland, Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014.

(AP Photo/Fabrice Coffrini, pool)

LARA JAKES

AP National Security Writer

LONDON (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Thursday that Russia could rebuild its relations with the West "if it simply helps to calm turbulent waters" on its border with eastern Ukraine, where pro-Moscow separatists are fighting with Kiev forces.

Speaking in Basel, Switzerland at a meeting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Kerry called on Moscow to uphold an earlier cease-fire agreement, which calls for withdrawing its support for the separatists in Ukraine and persuading them to release hostages. The U.S. and European Union have imposed sanctions on some Russians and separatists as punishment for their actions.

"The U.S. and countries that support Ukraine's sovereignty and rights do not seek confrontation," Kerry

said. "It is not our design or desire that we see a Russia isolated through its own actions."

"No one gains from this confrontation," Kerry said. The secretary met briefly — and separately — with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Georgian Foreign Minister Tamar Berushashvili. The United States and Russia are partners in the OSCE.

In his opening remarks, Kerry publicly cited "hundreds of Russian soldiers who fight and die" in Ukraine — alluding to what the U.S. says is proof of Moscow's direct involvement in the fighting. U.S. officials believe an estimated 400 Russian troops have been killed in Ukraine this year.

In their private half-hour meeting, Kerry and Lavrov spoke briefly about the situation in Ukraine, and Kerry urged Lavrov to have Mos-

cow "return to serious discussions" for a cease-fire, a senior State Department official who sat in on the discussion told reporters.

Lavrov did not respond to a reporter's question about the Russian troop deaths in Ukraine.

OSCE has sought to help broker an enduring cease-fire in eastern Ukraine, where it's believed Moscow is supporting the separatists with weapons and troops in their quest to secede from Ukraine's central government.

Kerry called it a "very turbulent year" and noted that when the 57-state OSCE met last year, Ukraine protesters were in the throes of demanding a new government in Kiev.

"They were warned by a

simple desire — to live in a country with an honest government," Kerry said at the start of the OSCE meeting. Over the last year, however, the fledgling leadership in Kiev has been beset by separatists in the eastern provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk, and has seen the Crimea region vote to secede.

Kerry said Kiev has been "tested by external aggression" yet still is "casting off the shackles of repression and opening a new and promising chapter in their nation's history."

In his annual state-of-the-nation address Thursday in Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin defended the annexation of Crimea, describing it as Russia's spiritual ground. □



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Al-Qaida in Yemen threatens to kill American journalist

KAREEM FAHIM
RUKMINI CALLIMACHI
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SANAA, Yemen - Seething over an attempt last month by U.S. commandos to free an American hostage, al-Qaida's Yemeni affiliate has threatened to kill him by the end of the week and warned the Obama administration against further "foolish action," according to a video posted on YouTube.

The journalist, Luke Somers,

who appears in the video posted late Wednesday, has been missing since September 2013, when he was snatched off a street in Sanaa, the Yemeni capital.

Somers, speaking to the camera, appears composed and healthy, wearing a purple shirt and glasses.

"I'm looking for any help that can get me out of this situation," he said. "I'm certain that my life is in danger. So as I sit here now, I

ask if there's anything that can be done, please let it be done."

His family, breaking its silence about the abduction for the first time, responded to the video by posting its own Thursday, imploring Somers' captors to release him, thanking them for treating him well and insisting that the family had no prior knowledge of the raid. The video of Somers amounted to an unusually public and hard-line

ultimatum from the affiliate, al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, according to analysts who study the group. The three-day deadline was among the shortest to have appeared in any al-Qaida videos in recent years. And it was a rare instance of the Yemeni branch formally releasing a video threatening a Western hostage.

Nasr bin Ali al-Ansi, a leader of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula who appears in the video, was vague

about the group's conditions for the hostage's release, saying only that they were "well known."

At the same time, he suggested that the ultimatum was a reaction to the Nov. 25 rescue attempt, which left seven al-Qaida members dead.

"We warn Obama and the American government of the consequences of proceeding with any other foolish action," he said in the video.

Islamic militants wage fierce attack on Grozny, Chechnya

ANDREW E. KRAMER
NEIL MacFARQUHAR
© 2014 New York Times

GROZNY, Chechnya - A fierce gunbattle between Islamist militants and government security forces paralyzed the center of the Chechen capital, Grozny, overnight Thursday, leaving some 20 people dead and embarrassing President Vladimir Putin just hours before he delivered his state-of-the-nation speech in Moscow.

It was the most violent, brazen attack linked to militant activity in the region in months. As dawn broke, smoke was rising from several locations, residents said in telephone interviews. Kheda Saratova, a human-rights activist, said that gunfire continued through the morning.

There was some speculation among analysts and on social media that the assault was carried out by fighters linked to the Islamic State or other radical groups fighting in Syria. If so, it would be the first such attack inside Russia.

Chechen fighters in Syria

have threatened to carry out attacks in response to Moscow's unalloyed support for the Syrian presi-

Chechnya, sought to play down the violence, attending Putin's speech in Moscow and claiming that

"When this all started," Kadyrov told reporters at the Kremlin, "I flew home, organized a special opera-

damaged building and made it back in time to listen to the address of our national leader." He was seen during the speech checking his telephone intently.

Militants traveling in three cars infiltrated the capital around 1 a.m., killing three traffic police officers at a checkpoint and then occupying the 10-story House of Publishing at the center of the city, according to a statement by the National Antiterrorist Committee.

Six of the gunmen were killed by security officers inside the building, which was gutted by fire that spread to a nearby market, it said.

The rest of the attackers were found near the House of Publishing in School No. 20, where fighting continued into Thursday, the statement said.

Ten police officers and nine militants were killed, Russian and Chechen government officials said. Another 28 police officers were injured, said Andrey Chatsky, a spokesman for the anti-terrorist committee.



Firefighters and emergency workers examine the burned market pavilions in downtown Grozny, Russia, Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014. A gun battle broke out early Thursday in the capital of Russia's North Caucasus republic of Chechnya, puncturing the patina of stability ensured by years of heavy-handed rule by a Kremlin-appointed leader. The violence erupted hours before Russian President Vladimir Putin began his annual state of the nation address in Moscow.

(AP Photo/Musa Sadulayev)

dent, Bashar Assad.

Ramzan A. Kadyrov, the Kremlin ally who runs

the reconstruction of the damaged buildings had already begun.

tion, killed the devils, held a meeting, gathered the staff needed to restore the

Disagreement on woman believed to be IS chief's wife

BEN HUBBARD
© 2014 New York Times

BEIRUT - Days after Lebanese officials claimed to have arrested the wife of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the head of the Islamic State jihadist organization, they continue to disagree with officials in Iraq who say the woman was never married to Baghdadi and has

relatives in a rival extremist group.

Lebanese and American officials said this week that Lebanon had arrested the wife of Baghdadi and one of her children as they tried to enter Lebanon from Syria more than a week earlier.

Some Lebanese officials gave the woman's name

as Saja al-Dulaimi.

On Wednesday, however, a spokesman for Iraq's Interior Ministry, Saad Maan, said in a statement that Dulaimi had never been married to Baghdadi but had a number of jihadist relatives.

Her brother, Omar, had been sentenced to death in Iraq for his role in bomb

attacks but had escaped from prison and fled to Syria, where he was arrested by the Syrian government and later released in a prisoner swap involving a group of Syrian nuns, Maan said.

Dulaimi's sister, Dua, had been arrested by the Kurdish authorities in Iraq while trying to carry out a suicide

attack, and her father had fled Iraq and joined the Nusra Front, al-Qaida's Syrian affiliate, Maan said.

Late on Wednesday, however, Lebanon's interior minister, Nuhad Machnouk, told a local television station that Dulaimi had been married to Baghdadi six years ago, but only for three months.



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Emirates police make arrest in American stabbing death

FAY ABUELGASIM
ADAM SCHRECK
Associated Press

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Police in the United Arab Emirates have arrested a woman they say is behind the stabbing death of an American teacher and a separate plot to bomb another American's house, a top official said Thursday as authorities moved swiftly to calm fears of instability in the normally peaceful Gulf nation.

Interior Minister Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who is also deputy prime minister, said the attacker targeted her victims based on their nationality alone in an attempt to create chaos and terrorize the country. He called the stabbing of the woman, who previously lived in Colorado, a crime that is "alien to our secure country."

"The victim of this brutal crime was a schoolteacher who was committed to building strong future generations," he told reporters.

Word of the gruesome killing, which left a trail of blood in a public restroom at an Abu Dhabi mall, has rattled the Emirates, a Western-allied, seven-state Gulf federation that includes the glitzy commercial hub of Dubai.

Violent crime and terrorist attacks are rare in the oil-rich country, which is home to a large foreign-born population that far outnumbers Emirati citizens.

Police say the teacher was stabbed to death by a butcher's knife-wielding attacker shrouded in the full black veil commonly worn by women throughout the Gulf Arab region. Emirati authorities identified the victim by the initials I.R. and said she was 47 years old.

The company that placed the victim in the Abu Dhabi teaching job, Vancouver, British Columbia-based Footprints Recruiting, gave her name as Ibolya Ryan. Managing Director Ben Glickman told The Associated Press she started teaching in the country last August or September and hoped to continue working in there.

"She was really a kind and enthusiastic person, and she was really enjoying her time over there," Glickman said.

Ryan taught in Colorado before moving to the Emirates, according to Glickman. She worked at Palmer Elementary School in Denver from 1997 to 2003, Denver Public Schools spokesman Doug Schepman said Thursday. Colorado records show Ryan had a license to teach in Colorado that was issued in December 2012 and that she was trained to work with special education students with moderate needs.

On a Footprints Recruiting webpage, Ryan describes herself as a Hungarian originally born and raised in neighboring Romania who trained as a teacher in the U.S. and Europe. She urged those considering teaching abroad to "be positive, open minded, flexible and take every challenge as a learning experience." □



Russian President Vladimir Putin gives his annual state of the nation address at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014. Russian President Vladimir Putin has defended the Kremlin's aggressive foreign policy, saying the actions are necessary for his country's survival.

(AP Photo/Pavel Golovkin)

Putin speech offers few reforms

LAURA MILLS
N. VASILYEVA
Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia will defend its geopolitical interests, President Vladimir Putin warned Thursday as he promised economic reforms to pull his country back from the brink of recession. But Putin's patriotic bluster and vague promises did little to assuage real fears that Western sanctions, plummeting oil prices and a collapsing ruble are crippling Russia's economy. In his annual state-of-the-nation address at the Grand Kremlin Palace, Putin announced measures to spur the country's flagging economy, which is set to enter recession in 2015 for the first time in six years.

"The quality and size of the Russian economy must correspond to our geopolitical and historical role," Putin said. "We must get out of this zero-growth trap and in the next three or four years raise our growth to above-average global levels."

Putin proposed a three-year freeze on tax inspections for companies as well as a tax amnesty for money brought back to Russia from abroad. But in a disappointment to investors, he offered no broader plan for pulling Russia out of its economic downturn.

"His freedom of maneuver is limited now and many important economic factors no longer depend on him: the ruble rate, the price of oil, inflation," said Moscow-based analyst Maria Lipman. "No matter what Putin says, whether he sounds conciliatory and reassuring or bellicose and threatening, this would not affect those basic factors." Putin spent much of his speech blaming his country's economic woes on the West, which he accused of wanting to dismember Russia like Yugoslavia, which broke up amid wars in the 1990s.

Putin said the United States and Europe would have imposed sanctions and found

other pretexts for holding Russia back even if tensions had not erupted in Ukraine this year.

"The politics of containment were not invented yesterday. ... The more we retreat and justify ourselves, the more brazen our opponents become and the more cynically and aggressively they behave," Putin said, adding that "no one will succeed in defeating Russia militarily."

He blamed the volatility of the ruble, which has lost about 40 percent of its value against the dollar this year, on speculators, and praised the Russian central bank's decision to allow the currency to float freely. The ruble fell further as he spoke.

He skimmed over more concrete issues affecting Russian consumers, such as the rapid rise in prices and an expected decline in living standards, instead portraying the difficulties as a necessary part of Russia's patriotic struggle. □



This photo shows Royal Caribbean cruise line's new Quantum of the Seas ship. The ship is the first at sea to offer attractions like bumper cars, simulated skydiving and an observation capsule called The North Star, with a bird's eye view 300 feet (91 meters) above the water. (AP Photo/Royal Caribbean)

CARIBBEAN News Briefs

Jamaican man convicted over a lottery scam

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — A Jamaican phone technician has been convicted of participating in one of the lottery scams that have swindled mostly elderly Americans out of their savings for years. In a Thursday statement, police said Kurt Taylor was convicted in a St. Elizabeth parish court. Officers who searched the 32-year-old man's residence last year found scamming paraphernalia, including lists with personal information of victims. Taylor is due to be sentenced on Friday. Last year, lawmakers passed legislation that has resulted in a growing number of convictions by targeting advanced fee fraud, identity theft and dishonest use of technology. Jamaican scammers mostly use disposable cellphones to entice victims to transfer money to claim winnings from a bogus lottery. Those who fall for the trick get continually harassed for more money. □

Puerto Rican soldier accused of smuggling

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — FBI agents on Thursday arrested a Puerto Rican U.S. Army reservist accused of smuggling more than \$113,000 in cash from Afghanistan and stealing military equipment. Staff Sgt. Luis Ramon Casellas also was indicted on charges that also include wrongfully obtaining nearly \$97,000 in federal overseas housing payments when officials said he had not been paying rent in Puerto Rico. Authorities said Casellas was deployed to Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan in April 2013. He was the leader of a three-man team ordered to help break down small U.S. bases ahead of troop withdrawals, a job that officials said included collecting government property for future use and selling the remainder for scrap to Afghan contractors. Casellas is accused of taking some \$6,300 worth of equipment, including laptops and radios, and sending it to Puerto Rico. □

Puerto Rico greets one of world's largest cruises

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico Thursday welcomed (AP) — Puerto Rico on one of the world's larg-

est cruise ships, a vessel that can carry more than 6,000 people.

Royal Caribbean's Quantum of the Seas arrived at a pier in historic Old San Juan that underwent an \$8.2 million renovation to accommodate ships of that size.

The ship is expected to visit Puerto Rico nine times through April, generating an estimated nearly \$5 million in revenue overall, Gov. Alejandro Garcia Padilla says.

Traffic was snarled in Old San Juan as Puerto Ricans

drove by to gawk at the ship while thousands of tourists disembarked and crowded into nearby stores.

The Port Authority has said that through the first eight months of this year, the number of cruise ships visiting Puerto Rico increased 41 percent over 2013.

Padilla said that nearly 207,000 cruise ship passengers are expected to visit Puerto Rico for all of December, a new monthly record for the U.S. territory. □

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At De Suikertuin;

Loretti Design Art & Jewelry Hosts Successful Exhibition

ORANJESTAD - Local artist Deborah de Weerd, Loretti Design & Art, showed off her creations at a well-attended event at De Suikertuin, on Wilhelminastraat. Deborah had her unique jewelry on display as well as her paintings, titled Landscapes of Imagination, decorative and colorful enlarged photographs printed on glass plates. Deborah who also (together with her husband Henk) owns and manages



Paradera Park Apartments, created a beautiful jewelry line that was officially certified Made in Aruba Artesania, just recently. Her Jewelry may be found on Facebook under Loretti Design, combining glass, fabric and leather. It is already worn by Dutch queen Maxima, who was given a piece by the artist, on the queen's recent visit here. The Loretti Royal Collection, naturally named in honor of the royal fashionista, offers sculpted Murano glass threaded on leather strands or fabric ropes, finished with silver hook clasps, in most



amazing colors. The more casual collection, which is more reasonably priced is named Loretti Streetwear, and can be worn all the

time. Debby also makes miniforms which are flame-worked soda-lime-glass sculptures, and very artistic and digitally manipulated picture-photographs she calls Landscapes of Imagination. Loretti developed gradually, Debby explains, when she was introduced to glass, as well as different and unusual other materials as a student at the Academy of the Arts in Maastricht, Netherlands. Pictured here snapshots from the successful event at De Suikertuin, on Wilhelminastraat, with fans and friends on hand to congratulate Deborah on the introduction of her 2015 collection. □



Some of our Trip Advisor reviews in a nutshell

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Group Synergy wins the Cafe the Plaza quiz night series



PALM BEACH - The final session of the 8-week long pub quiz series on Tuesdays at Café the Plaza in the Renaissance Mall was filled with questions about Christmas, like: how does one say Merry Christmas in

French, in which country people say Blythe Yule or Bon Nadal. What is the title of George Michael and Wham!'s Christmas hit in 1984 and what is the chorus of John Lennon's Merry Christmas song. Synergy,

the group that dominated all the pub quiz evenings, was victorious and took the prizes and bottles of wine home.

Second place was for the group Chain Gang, while Bier Hier was third. Syner-



gy's Remco Boersma, Jan Belzer, Jamal Mahawat Khan en Louis Bernoski received a BBQ voucher for MooMba Beach as well as an ice cold bottle of champagne, which was opened at once to celebrate the group's victory. Purgatory, second overall, received vouchers for The Cinemas and Chain Gang

got bottles of wine for their third place overall. The Plaza Quiz Night series is on Christmas holiday during the coming weeks and will resume on January 6. Photos show the winning group Synergy and their happy faces in the company of quiz master Evert Bongers, assistant Petra Elsten and stagiair Marije. □

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PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple whom are loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba, as Ambassadors of Goodwill, at the Marriott Ocean Club. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. Lee and Mrs. Mar-

sha Adler from Orlando, Florida. Lee and Marsha are loyal members of the Marriott Ocean Club, and they love Aruba for the weather, beaches, safety, and restaurants, but most of all they love the friendly Aruban people. The certificate was presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Ms. Lisette Bouwman and GM Mr. Erwin Noguera representing the Marriott Ocean Club. □

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Friday	Seasons Puzzle Night \$1100 in cash prizes <small>First drawing starts at 9pm</small>
Saturday	Sizzling Santa's Cash Night \$2000 in cash prizes <small>First drawing starts at 9pm</small>
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The Casino at the Radisson hosts two exciting December Tournaments

PALM BEACH - The Casino at the Radisson is inviting fans and friends to join the fun on December 12th & December 26th as the last two slot tournament of the year unfold. Sign up at 6:30pm, and start spinning at 8pm, for generous prizes, 1st place \$500, 2nd place \$300 and 3rd place \$200, 4th to 8th place get \$50 Free Play, all for a reasonable buy-in of \$10 and a re-buy of \$5.

Patrons visiting the Casino at the Radisson may also participate in the exciting Spin the Jingle Wheel promotion, fun drawings every Wednesday & Thursday 9pm, 10pm and 11pm, awarding them cash prizes, gift baskets and shopping sprees at Super Food and Kooyman Home Improvement Store. The promotion concludes on December 22nd, with a Guests' Appreciation Party

with live entertainment, snacks and bottomless mimosa.

While at the casino, players are invited to sign up for the Player's Membership Card, and win points and rewards any time they play, with double points on slots Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 12noon to 4pm and on Saturdays & Sundays from 4pm to 8pm; triple points on slots on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10pm to 2am.

Pictured here the winners of the last slot tournament which enjoyed 31 participants and complete 10 rounds of tournament fun. The two last tournament of the year are scheduled for the 12th and the 26th respectively. Visit the Casino at the Radisson, where players win and winners play, open from 12noon till 4am and on Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 4am.





Philadelphia 76ers center Drew Gordon, left, forward JaKarr Sampson (9), forward Jerami Grant (39) and guard Hollis Thompson watch from the bench in the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Minnesota Timberwolves, Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2014, in Minneapolis. The 76ers avoided tying the record for the worst start to a season in NBA history, ending their 0-17 skid with an 85-77 victory over the Timberwolves on Wednesday night.

Associated Press
Page 19

76ers nab 1st win of the NBA season

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Scott may try to persuade Bryant to play on

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lakers coach Byron Scott wants Kobe Bryant to keep playing — and he's willing to do whatever it takes to keep the star on the court. Throughout a miserable 5-13 start to the season, Bryant has been a bright spot. He's leading the NBA in scoring with a 25.8 average in nearly 36 minutes per game.

"The one thing I've got to do is look at his minutes, and make sure I don't go overboard," Scott said before Wednesday's game against the Washington Wizards.

The 16-time All-Star played 33 minutes in Tuesday night's win at Detroit, and said afterward he was tired. Scott says Bryant can set his own schedule — for practice.

"I don't need him in practice at all, to be honest with you," Scott said. "All he needs to know is what we're doing, coverage-



Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant (24) balances on one foot as he saves the ball from going out of bounds in the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Washington Wizards, Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2014, in Washington. The Wizards won 111-95.

Associated Press

wise."

The 36-year-old Bryant has one more year after this one on his contract. Scott is hoping he'll play longer than that.

"We'll talk about that," Scott said. "He's got a lot left in that tank. I think if we put something together that excites him, we have a real good chance of saying, 'play another year.'"

Scott has known Bryant since 1996 when they were teammates in the coach's last year as a player — and Bryant's first.

"He's still hungry. He still loves the game. He still loves the competition. He still

loves going against these younger guys now because he was once that younger guy," Scott said. □

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In this Nov. 9, 2014, file photo, Baltimore Ravens defensive end Haloti Ngata watches the action from the sidelines during the second half of an NFL football game against the Tennessee Titans in Baltimore.

Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Baltimore Ravens defensive tackle Haloti Ngata was suspended without pay for four games by the NFL on Thursday for taking performance-enhancing substances.

Ngata will miss the rest of the regular season but will be eligible for the playoffs, the league said.

Ngata said in a statement released by the team that he took Adderall, a drug used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

"I made a mistake, and I

own this," he said.

The suspension costs Baltimore one of its defensive stars as the Ravens compete for a playoff berth. They're 1 1/2 games behind the Cincinnati Bengals in the AFC North division, and one of six 7-5 teams tied for the second wild-card spot.

"I am deeply sorry and broken up over this," Ngata said. "I let down my family, my teammates, Ravens fans and myself. My hope is that the Ravens make the playoffs, and I believe they

IPTL organizers bullish after initial success

SINGAPORE (AP) — Even though Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer have yet to play in the new International Premier Tennis League, founder Mahesh Bhupathi says it has already made its presence felt and will be expanded next year.

"We've achieved something out of the box here that's very challenging," Bhupathi said on Thurs-

day, a week after the fast-paced, mixed-team format made its debut in Manila.

It features past and present players such as Andre Agassi, Serena Williams, Maria Sharapova and Ana Ivanovic in four teams in four countries in Asia and the Middle East.

"We're definitely going to add two cities next year," Bhupathi, the retired doubles specialist, said.

Ravens' Haloti Ngata draws 4-game drug ban by NFL

can do this. And then I can come back and help us win." Ngata has two sacks, two interceptions and two forced fumbles in 12 games this season.

Under its agreement with the union, the NFL doesn't identify the substance when a player is punished.

Adderall has frequently been blamed by suspended players in recent years, but the league cannot confirm or deny whether that was the basis for the positive test. Still, the NFL have been concerned about an increase in Adderall use.

The league's drug tests don't differentiate between Adderall and other amphetamines, which can help with concentration and stamina. Players diagnosed with ADHD can apply for a therapeutic use exemption that permits them to take Adderall.

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NBA Capsules

76ers snap 0-17 start with 85-77 win over Wolves

The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The Philadelphia 76ers avoided tying the record for the worst start to a season in NBA history, ending their 0-17 skid with an 85-77 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Wednesday night.

Michael Carter-Williams had 20 points, nine rebounds and nine assists and Robert Covington added 17 points to keep Philadelphia from tying the 0-18 start by the New Jersey Nets in 2009-10. The Sixers shot just 39 percent against the worst defense in the league and turned the ball over 19 times. They scored only nine points in the second quarter, but in the end there were smiles and hugs for the first time this season. Gorgui Dieng had 15 points and 16 rebounds for the Timberwolves. But Minnesota shot just 35.7 percent and turned the ball over 19 times to lose for the 11th time in 13 games.

CELTICS 109, PISTONS 102, OT

BOSTON (AP) — Jeff Green scored 32 points, including a 3-pointer as Boston opened overtime with eight straight points, and snapped a five-game losing streak.

The loss was the 10th in a row for Detroit. Greg Monroe scored 15 of his 29 points after the 3:13 mark of the fourth, when the Pistons erased an 11-point deficit. But Detroit never recovered after giving up the first three baskets — including a pair of 3-pointers — to start the extra period. Andre Drummond had 27 points, 14 rebounds, four steals and five blocked shots, including Green's potential game-winner at the end of regulation, for

Detroit. Brandon Jennings had 12 assists and one point on 0-for-11 shooting. Kelly Olynyk had 20 points and seven rebounds for Boston, which had lost six in a row at home.

NETS 95, SPURS 93, OT
NEW YORK (AP) — Mirza Teletovic had a season-high 26 points and a career-best 15 rebounds starting in place of Kevin Garnett, and Brooklyn snapped San Antonio's eight-game winning streak.

The Nets regrouped in overtime after blowing a 14-point lead in the final 5 minutes of regulation and beat a team with a winning record for the first time this season.

Danny Green had 20 points, 10 rebounds and the tying 3-pointer with 2.4 seconds left in regulation for San Antonio. The Spurs endured poor shooting nights from their starting frontcourt and fell to 2-1 on a road trip that ends Friday at Memphis, which entered play Wednesday tied for the best record in the league.

HAWKS 112, HEAT 102

MIAMI (AP) — Jeff Teague scored 27 points, Kyle Korver scored 18 and Atlanta handed Miami another home loss.

Dennis Schroder scored 16 and Paul Millsap finished with 14 for the Hawks, who beat the Heat for the second time in two meetings this season. An 18-5 run to end the third quarter was the deciding blow for Atlanta, which led by 10 in the first quarter, 14 in the second and pushed the margin to 88-72 going into the final 12 minutes.

The Hawks have now won four straight and six of seven.

Dwyane Wade scored 28 points and Chris Bosh finished

with 27 points and 11 rebounds for Miami, which has lost six of its last eight home games. Mario Chalmers finished with 19 points and 11 assists for the Heat.

CLIPPERS 114, MAGIC 86
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Blake Griffin scored 21 points and J.J. Redick had 20 before both sat out the fourth

more since Paul joined the club.

Tobias Harris scored 16 points for the Magic, who had only four offensive rebounds and no second-chance points through the first three quarters. They lost for the sixth time in seven games and committed 17 turnovers that the Clippers converted into 19 points.



Los Angeles Clippers' Blake Griffin, right, is fouled by Orlando Magic's Kyle O'Quinn during the first half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2014, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

quarter, and the Clippers won their sixth straight.

Chris Paul had 19 points and 10 assists for the Clippers, who have won their last four by an average margin of 21.6 points. DeAndre Jordan finished with 16 rebounds and blocked three shots. The two-time defending Pacific Division champions, who finished with a total of 32 assists, are 84-14 when they get 30 or

MAVERICKS 107, BUCKS 105
MILWAUKEE (AP) — Monta Ellis hit a wild, fallaway jumper at the buzzer, lifting Dallas past Milwaukee.

A night after Ellis starred in a double-overtime win at Chicago, he scored 23. He had eight in the final two minutes on what otherwise had been a bad shooting night for the Mavericks' top scorer, playing against his former team.

The Mavericks won their fifth in a row while resting Dirk Nowitzki because of a sore back. Coach Rick Carlisle called it a "precautionary" move.

Brandon Knight scored 25 points and Khris Middleton added 21 for the Bucks in their third straight loss.

BULLS 102, HORNETS 95

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Pau Gasol had 19 points and 15 rebounds, Joakim Noah and Nikola Mirotic each posted double-doubles, and Chicago handed Charlotte its 10th straight loss.

Noah had 14 points and 10 rebounds, and Mirotic added 11 points and 12 rebounds as the Bulls bounced back from a double-overtime loss to Dallas on Tuesday night.

Kirk Hinrich, who had the costly foul on a 3-point shot in the loss to the Mavericks, came up with two big 3-pointers in the final three minutes to help the Bulls improve to 10-3 on the road. It is the fifth straight game the Bulls have scored at least 100 points.

Kemba Walker had 23 points, and Lance Stephenson had a season-high 20 points to lead the Hornets, who have lost 12 of 13.

RAPTORS 123, JAZZ 104

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Kyle Lowry scored a season-high 39 points on 13-of-22 shooting as Toronto sent Utah to its seventh straight loss.

Greivis Vasquez and Lou Williams each had 17 for the Raptors.

Derrick Favors and Enes Kanter scored 19 points apiece for Utah. Gordon Hayward added 16 points and Trey Burke had 15 and eight assists for the Jazz, who trailed through the final three quarters. □

Tiger Woods stumbles to a 77 in his return

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

WINDERMERE, Fla. (AP)

— Tiger Woods took on any shot without pain or worry Thursday, a feeling he hasn't had on the golf course in a long time.

As for his short game?

He hadn't seen anything like it in longer than he can remember, and it was shocking.

Woods flubbed four chips. He took two shots to get out of a bunker on the par-5 seventh hole. He didn't have a birdie putt inside 20 feet until the 11th hole. And on the four birdie chances he had inside 10 feet on the back nine, he made only one of them. And that was a tap-in.

In his first competition in nearly four months, Woods wound up with a 5-over 77 at Isleworth, his home course for his first 16 years as a pro. That put him in last place in the 18-man field, 11 shots behind Jordan Spieth, who is coming off a runaway victory last week in the Australian Open.

"One of those days where nothing went my way," Woods said.

The score was not nearly as significant as his health in what has been a lost year for Woods because of back problems. He had surgery a week before the

Masters that kept him out for three months. He had not played since Aug. 9 at the PGA Championship because of lingering back issues, and the need to build up his muscle structure.

Woods missed the cut at Congressional in June in his first tournament after back surgery. This time, he is coming back from injury and he is working with a new coach. In that respect, the score was not a surprise.

It was the 10th time in 12 rounds that he failed to break par since his first return in June.

Even so, some of the shots were shocking, especially around the green.

On the par-5 17th, he hit his second shot just left of the green, pin-high in a deep collection area. Woods no sooner hit his chip that he angrily swung back-handed toward his divot, knowing what was coming next. The ball didn't come close to reaching the green, and Woods turned his back as the ball rolled back toward his feet.

He compensated on the next shot and sent it well past the hole, and he had to make a 10-footer just to escape with par.

The other two holes where he muffed chips cost him a

double bogey at No. 8 and a bogey at the par-5 13th. Two shots out of the bunker on the par-5 seventh led to bogey.

"It is surprising that I could hit chips that poorly," he said.

The 77 was his second-highest score of the year. He had a 79 on the South Course at Torrey Pines in January. What kept the day from being a total loss is that Woods reported feeling "zero pain."

"I haven't said that in a long time," Woods said. "It's very exciting to step up there and hit the drives I hit — especially on the back nine — and start launching it and feel nothing."

The opening drive set the tone for the day — and his return.

Woods was about to hit his first shot in nearly four months when he heard a loud click of a camera and backed off. Then, he tugged his 3-wood through the fairway, beyond an iron fence into someone's backyard and presumably into a swimming pool. He had to hit another from the tee and did well to escape with a bogey.

Rust would seem to be an issue, but it certainly wasn't the case for Steve Stricker. He hasn't played since the PGA Championship, either,



Tiger Woods tees off on the fourth hole during the first round of the Hero World Challenge golf tournament on Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014, in Windermere, Fla.

Associated Press

yet Stricker made five birdies in a bogey-free round of 67 and was one shot behind Spieth, along with Dubai World Tour Championship winner Henrik Stenson, Zach Johnson and Rickie Fowler.

Woods played with Jason Day, who last competed at the Tour Championship three months ago. Day shot a 71. FedEx Cup champion Billy Horschel and Patrick

Reed, both at 73, were the only other players over par on a warm, breezy afternoon. Spieth won by six shots in Australia last week for his second career title. The 21-year-old flew home to Dallas, then came out to Florida the next day. He was feeling sluggish on Wednesday, but there was no sign of jet lag on Thursday. And there is nothing wrong with his game. □

Tim Howard wins player of year award

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)

— Everton goalkeeper Tim Howard has won the U.S. player of the year award.

It is the first time Howard has won the honor given to a U.S. team member by Futbol de Primera.

A nationwide panel of journalists gave Howard a total of 363 points to beat MLS players Jermaine Jones, who had 160 points, and Clint Dempsey, 147.

Howard, 35, gave

some spectacular performances at the World Cup, including 16 saves in the 2-1 loss in extra time to Belgium in Brazil.

He has made 104 appearances for the national team. This was the sixth time he was a finalist for the honor.

Howard has stepped away from playing for the national team for this season to focus on Everton, his English Premier League club since 2006. □



In this June 26, 2014, file photo, United States' goalkeeper Tim Howard gives a thumbs up to supporters after qualifying for the next round of the World Cup soccer tournament following their 1-0 loss to Germany at the Arena Pernambuco in Recife, Brazil.

Associated Press

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NHL Capsules

Blackhawks beat Blues to close on Central lead

The Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Kris Versteeg scored 59 seconds into the third period, Patrick Kane added two more goals, and the Chicago Blackhawks beat the St. Louis Blues 4-1 on Wednesday night for their fourth consecutive victory.

Marcus Kruger also scored for Chicago, and Antti Raanta had 40 saves in his first start since Corey Crawford was sidelined by a left foot injury. Versteeg also had the primary assist on each of Kane's goals. Back at home after a 5-1 road trip, Chicago killed off each of St. Louis' six power plays and won for the seventh time in eight games.

Ian Cole scored in the second for the Blues, who had won four of five. Jake Allen made 29 saves. Martin Brodeur was the backup to Allen in St. Louis' first game since the NHL's winningest goalie signed a one-year contract on Tuesday.

WILD 2, CANADIENS 1
ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Jason Zucker and Jason Pominville scored improbable goals to lift Minnesota over Montreal. Darcy Kuemper stopped 18 shots

after allowing four goals in each of his last two starts. Minnesota has won seven of 10.

Alex Galchenyuk scored in the final minute after Mon-

dedicated the game to the longtime captain who won 10 Stanley Cup titles as a player and seven more as an executive. All Montreal players wore No.

marking the first time the NHL leader in ice time has missed a game since joining the Wild on July 4, 2012. He had played in 153 consecutive regular-season

Simmonds' late tying goal for a victory over spiraling Philadelphia.

Simmonds scored his second goal with 2.6 seconds left in regulation for the Flyers, who lost their ninth consecutive road game.

Frederik Andersen made 31 saves for Anaheim, stopping Claude Giroux to end the shootout.

Patrick Maroon scored in the third period for the Ducks, who pulled even with Tampa Bay atop the overall NHL standings with their fifth win in seven games.

Sami Vatanen, Cam Fowler and Ryan Getzlaf also scored for Anaheim, which came back from a two-goal deficit while the clubs combined for six goals in an entertaining second period.

Michael Raffl and R.J. Umberger also scored in the second period for Philadelphia. Steve Mason stopped 29 shots in the Flyers' sixth straight defeat overall — and their second straight heartbreaker following a last-minute loss in San Jose on Tuesday night. **JETS 3, OILERS 2, OT**
WINNIPEG, Manitoba (AP) — Mathieu Perreault scored 17 seconds into overtime, and Winnipeg sent Edmonton to its 11th straight loss.

Perrault tipped Jacob Trouba's point shot past goalie Ben Scrivens to win it. Trouba and Dustin Byfuglien also scored for the Jets. Teddy Purcell Perron and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins had goals for the Oilers (6-15-5), who haven't beaten a Western Conference opponent this season.

Edmonton's longest winless streak is 14 games from Oct. 11-Nov. 7, 1993.

Ondrej Pavelec made 24 saves in the win. Scrivens stopped 21 shots.

Perron had given Edmonton a 2-1 lead at 1:31 of the third period when he capitalized on a Winnipeg turnover. Byfuglien tied it with 3:06 left in regulation when he redirected in Mark Stuart's point shot. He also assisted on Trouba's goal. □



St. Louis Blues goalie Jake Allen (34) makes a save on Chicago Blackhawks right wing Kris Versteeg (23) as Barret Jackman (5), Alex Pietrangelo (27), David Backes (42) and Jonathan Toews watch during the second period of an NHL hockey game Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2014, in Chicago.

Associated Press

treal pulled goalie Carey Price, who made 33 saves. The Canadiens are 1-3-1 in their past five games. Playing with heavy hearts one day after the death of Hall of Famer Jean Beliveau, the Canadiens

4 on their helmets. Other than getting the first six shots of the third period, the Canadiens provided little offense against a team missing its top defenseman, Ryan Suter. Suter sat out due to illness,

games and 18 more in the postseason.

DUCKS 5, FLYERS 4, SO
ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — Jakob Silfverberg and Corey Perry scored in the shootout, and Anaheim rebounded from Wayne

Former Senators captain Alfredsson retires

OTTAWA, Ontario (AP) — Former Senators captain Daniel Alfredsson has officially retired.

The 41-year-old Swedish forward made the announcement at Ottawa's Canadian Tire Centre, the rink he called home for most of his 18 seasons in the NHL.

The Senators have signed their longtime captain to a ceremonial one-day contract that will allow him to lace up his skates in his old stall and take part in pre-game warm-ups with his old team.

"Being out there with the boys again, is going to be a special feeling," Alfredsson said. "I'm going to try to not fall down."

Alfredsson wore his No.

11 jersey at a news conference on Thursday. The Senators' captain from 1999 to 2013, Alfredsson left last year to sign with the Detroit Red Wings.

He is remembered fondly for the goal he scored against the Buffalo Sabres to send the Senators to the Stanley Cup final in 2007, the love fest at the 2012 All-Star game, and for winning a gold medal with Sweden at the 2006 Olympics.

It began with the decision to leave Goteborg, Sweden, at 22 to play for the Senators, who drafted him in the sixth round in 1994. Alfredsson was glad he and Bibbi, his girlfriend at the time, "made the leap."

"One evening nearly 20 years ago a young man in a small town in Sweden got a phone call that would change his life," Alfredsson said. "We began an incredible new chapter of our lives in your town starting in August 1995. Our marvelous boys were born here, and we grew from youngsters into aging parents. You made your town our town."

Ottawa was Alfredsson's town in his Calder Trophy season in 1995-96, and through 15 playoff appearances. One of his favorite memories was seeing thousands of people lined up along the street to celebrate the trip to the Cup final.

"I never believed that my



Former Ottawa Senators captain Daniel Alfredsson looks on during an NHL hockey news conference announcing his retirement, Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014 in Ottawa.

Associated Press

career entitled me to any special treatment," Alfredsson said. "However, Bibbi and I both agreed this was the right thing to do and it would give us a chance to say thank you to the people and the fans of Ottawa." □

Mickey and math? Disney launches education apps

BARBARA ORTUTAY

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Walt Disney Co. is launching a new line of learning tools designed to help parents encourage kids 3 to 8 to learn outside of school. Disney Imagicademy begins with a series of mobile apps but will later expand into other products such as books and interactive toys. Over time, the target age will also grow to include older kids.

To start, Disney is launching an iPad app called "Mickey's Magical Math World" on Dec. 11, focused on math-based activities such as counting, shapes, logic and sorting. Within the app, there are five add-on activities such as "Minnie's Robot Count-Along" and "Goofy's Silly Sorting." The basic app is free to use, but the enhanced activities cost \$4.99 each or \$19.99 for all five. Future apps, on subjects ranging from life science using characters from Disney's "Frozen" to creative arts, will be similarly priced. The apps are ad free, keeping with laws that prevent targeting online advertising at kids under 13.

A companion app for parents lets grown-ups follow along with what their kids are doing even if they are using a separate mobile device. It also suggests a bevy of offline activities, such as creating "rocket racers" using toilet paper tubes, duct tape and balloons, or making a colorful "quilt" out of tissue paper to learn shapes.

Disney's entry into the learning app market comes at a popular time for educational apps, thanks to the proliferation of mobile devices and as more parents grow comfortable letting their kids use them, at least with limits in place. The American Association of Pediatrics estimates that children spend an average of seven hours a day on "entertainment

media" that includes TVs, computers, phones and other electronic devices. It recommends no more than two hours a day spent consuming and engaging with "high-quality content."

Disney Publishing Worldwide, the creator of Imagicademy and also

its apps will help them stand out from a crowd of more than 100,000 learning apps aimed at kids. That said, there are other big name brands in the learning app space, including Sesame Street. Bob Chapek, president of Disney Consumer Product, says what the

subjects.

"What really makes (Imagicademy) different is that it's done with a very compelling curriculum-based approach," he said. "And the fact that it's based on characters and mythologies that kids love." Shortly after the math

that social skills are as important as the "1,2,3,4,5 things" when it comes to learning.

Kara Norman, a mother of two and founder of Empower Her that focuses on supporting women and girls, said she likes that the apps show Minnie Mouse building a



This product image provided by The Walt Disney Co. shows a Disney Imagicademy iPad app called "Mickey's Magical Math World," left, and a companion iPhone app for parents. The app, which will be released on Dec. 11, focuses on math-based activities such as counting, shapes, logic and sorting.

Associated Press

the world's largest publisher of children's books, hopes that its content will meet the high-quality barrier that is entertaining as well as educational. Disney is betting that its brand recognition and the quality of

company heard from parents is that it was difficult to find high-quality apps among the thousands out there. And once parents did find an app they liked, "there was no logical progression" to other levels and

app, Chapek says Disney will launch a creative arts portfolio, then science, reading and social skills. The latter, he says, is "the outgrowth of our work with experts" who specialize in early childhood education and believe

robot. She also appreciates the parenting portal of the apps.

"It's helpful, especially for younger parents," she said. "It's hard to manage what your kids are doing but not take (the iPad) from them." □

Barnes & Noble, Microsoft end Nook deal

NEW YORK (AP) — Bookseller Barnes & Noble said Thursday it is ending its commercial agreement with Microsoft for its Nook e-book reader ahead of its planned Nook spinoff.

The news came as the largest U.S. traditional bookseller reported second-quarter net income that missed expectations. Shares fell nearly 13 percent in pre-market trading.

Barnes & Noble, beset by

tough competition from online retailers like Amazon and discount stores like Wal-Mart, said in June that it plans to split off its money-losing Nook e-reader division as it looks to boost shareholder value.

In 2012 Microsoft paid \$300 million for a 17.6 percent stake in Barnes & Noble's college bookstores and Nook business. The investment helped support the Nook business and Barnes



In this Dec. 11, 2012 file photo, Miguel Mercado unpacks Nook tablets at the Barnes & Noble distribution center in Monroe Township, N.J.

Associated Press

& Noble supplied Nook content and apps for Microsoft's Windows products. On Thursday Barnes & Noble said it will buy out Microsoft's stake in the business for \$125 million. The company also said the

spinoff could occur by the end of August 2015.

Shares of Barnes & Noble fell \$2.82, or 12.7 percent, to \$19.42 in morning trading. The stock had been up about 30 percent since the beginning of the year. □

US unemployment aid applications fall to 297,000

JOSH BOAK

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of people seeking U.S. unemployment benefits slipped below 300,000 last week, after having spiked above that level in the prior week for the first time in nearly three months.

Weekly applications fell 17,000 to a seasonally adjusted 297,000, the Labor Department said Thursday. The four-week average, a less volatile measure, rose 4,750 to 299,000.

Applications are a proxy for layoffs. As fewer people seek unemployment benefits, it suggests that em-

ployers are holding onto more workers and potentially looking to bolster their hiring. Applications have been under 300,000 for 11 of the past 12 weeks, an unusually low level that suggests employers are anticipating stronger economic growth. The four week average for jobless claims

has plummeted 9 percent over the past 12 months. Such sharp declines in applications are unlikely to continue, analysts said. But at sub-300,000 levels, they point to better job gains in the Labor Department's employment report, said Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon

Macroeconomics.

"The trend probably has now flattened off, but at an extraordinarily low level, consistent with very strong payroll numbers," Shepherdson said.

The decline in application for unemployment benefits has been matched by a surge in hiring. □

Wall Street slips on ECB stimulus speculation

KEN SWEET

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market posted slight losses Thursday after European Central Bank officials decided to delay any stimulus until next year. Investors also braced for the release of Friday's closely watched U.S. jobs report.

Stocks had been solidly lower much of the day, but did recover some of their losses after news outlets reported that the European Central Bank would consider a large stimulus package for next month.

Earlier comments from ECB President Mario Draghi were initially interpreted to mean the bank wouldn't act until next year, but by late Thursday consensus was building that stimulus was imminent.

"The ECB and Draghi basically said, 'we don't know what we are doing yet, but when we do it next month, it's going to be big,'" said Ian Winer, head of equity trading at Wedbush Securities.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 12.52 points, or 0.1 percent, to 17,900.10. It was down nearly 100 points

5.04 points, or 0.1 percent, to 4,769.44.

Energy stocks were among the hardest hit. The S&P

a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange on news that Saudi Arabia reduced its January prices

\$69.64 on the ICE Futures exchange in London.

Bloomberg News reported that ECB officials are considering a large bond-purchasing program that will include European government debt, citing unnamed central bank figures. The report followed the ECB's decision Thursday to keep its main interest rate unchanged at a record low of 0.05 percent. Draghi hinted at a news conference that the bank could act early next year. He said the ECB will reassess the success of its existing stimulus programs and the impact of low oil prices on Europe's economy. If needed, the ECB could do more, he said.

Draghi's comments and the Bloomberg News report indicate that the ECB is getting ready to make its own large-scale purchases of government bonds. The policy, known as quantitative easing, or "QE," has been used by the U.S. Federal Reserve, the Bank of England and the Bank of Japan. □



Specialist Jason Hardzewicz works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014. The stock market posted slight losses Thursday after European Central Bank officials decided to delay any stimulus for the struggling continent until next year.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

earlier in the day.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 2.41 points, or 0.1 percent, to 2,071.92 and the Nasdaq composite fell

500's energy sector lost nearly 1 percent as the price of oil sank yet again. Benchmark U.S. crude fell 57 cents to close at \$66.81

to U.S. and Asian customers. Brent crude, a benchmark for international oils used by many U.S. refineries, fell 28 cents to close at

Sears' 3Q loss widens as it strives for a turnaround

RACHEL ABRAMS

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For the past year, Sears Holdings, the former retail powerhouse, has moved to carve off assets in a bid to raise cash.

But some question whether those efforts will work quickly enough.

The retailer fueled that speculation Thursday, when the company reported that its third-quarter loss had widened from the same period a year ago. The company also disclosed that it planned to

close 235 stores this year.

To help shore up its balance sheet, Sears has sold assets like the Lands' End clothing business and a stake in its Canadian operation. But it has gotten deeper into debt at the same time.

On Thursday, Sears disclosed that its short-term debt increased to \$2.1 billion in the third quarter, which ended Nov. 1, up from \$1.8 billion for the same period last year.

Some of that money has come from Sears' own

chief executive and largest shareholder, the hedge fund manager Edward S. Lampert. Lampert has lent Sears \$400 million, using 25 Sears stores as collateral. The company has cash on its books totaling \$326 million, down from \$384 million at this time last year.

Last month, Sears announced that it was considering the unusual step of selling 200 and 300 stores to a new real estate investment trust, or REIT. Sears, which also owns the budget Kmart chain, has a

total of more than 1,800 stores, about 700 of which are owned.

"The problem for SHLD equity is that this REIT is effectively the end game," Greg Melich, an analyst with Evercore, wrote in a note in November, referring to Sears by its stock ticker symbol.

If Sears goes through with the sale, its equity as a retailer would be close to zero, Melich said.

"Bottom line: With the closure or planned closure of 235 stores, operating results

are declining at a slower rate, but SHLD is far from being on a path of recovery," he wrote.

In a prerecorded call to discuss the company's results Thursday, Lampert said that Sears was confident that a sale "would result in substantial liquidity to Sears Holdings."

For the third quarter, Sears posted a loss of \$548 million on \$7.2 billion in revenue, compared with \$534 million on \$8.3 billion revenue for the same period last year. □

Rock Bottom Economics



PAUL KRUGMAN
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Six years ago the Federal Reserve hit rock bottom. It had been cutting the federal funds rate, the interest rate it uses to steer the economy, more or less frantically in an unsuccessful attempt to get ahead of the recession and financial crisis. But it eventually reached the point where it could cut no more, because interest rates can't go below zero. On Dec. 16, 2008, the Fed set its interest target between 0 and 0.25 percent, where it remains to this day. The fact that we've spent six years at the so-called zero lower bound is amazing and depressing. What's even more amazing and depressing, if you ask me, is how slow our economic discourse has been to catch up with the new reality. Everything changes when the economy is at rock bottom - or, to use the term of art, in a liquidity trap (don't ask). But for the longest time, nobody with the power to shape policy would believe it.

What do I mean by saying that everything changes? As I wrote way back when, in a rock-bottom economy "the usual rules of economic policy no longer apply: virtue becomes vice, caution is risky and prudence is folly." Government spending doesn't compete with private investment - it actually promotes business spending. Central bankers, who normally cultivate an image as stern inflation-fighters, need to do the exact opposite, convincing markets and investors that they will push inflation up. "Structural reform," which usually means making it easier to cut wages, is more likely to destroy jobs than create them. This may all sound wild and radical, but it isn't. In fact, it's what mainstream economic analysis says will happen once interest rates hit zero. And it's also what history tells us. If you paid attention to the lessons of post-bubble Japan, or for that matter the U.S. economy in the 1930s, you were more or less ready for the looking-glass world of economic policy we've lived in since 2008.

But as I said, nobody would believe it. By and large, policymakers and Very Serious People in general went with gut feelings rather than careful economic analysis. Yes, they sometimes found credentialed economists to back their positions, but they used

these economists the way a drunkard uses a lamppost: for support, not for illumination. And what the guts of these serious people have told them, year after year, is to fear - and do - exactly the wrong things. Thus we were told again and again that budget deficits were our most pressing economic problem, that interest rates would soar any day now unless we imposed harsh fiscal austerity. I could have told you that this was foolish, and in fact I did, and sure enough, the predicted interest rate spike never happened - but demands that we cut government spending now, now, now have cost millions of jobs and deeply damaged our infrastructure.

We were also told repeatedly that printing money - not what the Fed was actually doing, but never mind - would lead to "currency debasement and inflation." The Fed, to its credit, stood up to this pressure, but other central banks didn't. The European Central Bank, in particular, raised rates in 2011 to head off a nonexistent inflationary threat. It eventually reversed course but has never gotten things back on track. At this point European inflation is far below the official target of 2 percent, and the Continent is flirting with outright deflation. But are these bad calls just water under the bridge? Isn't the era of rock-bottom economics just about over? Don't count on it.

It's true that with the U.S. unemployment rate dropping, most analysts expect the Fed to raise interest rates sometime next year. But inflation is low, wages are weak, and the Fed seems to realize that raising rates too soon would be disastrous. Meanwhile, Europe looks further than ever from economic liftoff, while Japan is still struggling to escape from deflation. Oh, and China, which is starting to remind some of us of Japan in the late 1980s, could join the rock-bottom club sooner than you think. So the counterintuitive realities of economic policy at the zero lower bound are likely to remain relevant for a long time to come, which makes it crucial that influential people understand those realities. Unfortunately, too many still don't; one of the most striking aspects of economic debate in recent years has been the extent to which those whose economic doctrines have failed the reality test refuse to admit error, let alone learn from it. The intellectual leaders of the new majority in Congress still insist that we're living in an Ayn Rand novel; German officials still insist that the problem is that debtors haven't suffered enough. This bodes ill for the future. What people in power don't know, or worse what they think they know but isn't so, can very definitely hurt us. □



It's Bigger Than Immigration



CHARLES M. BLOW
© 2014 New York Times

Don't let yourself get lost in the weeds. Don't allow yourself to believe that opposition to President Barack Obama's executive actions on immigration is only about that issue, the president's tactics, or his lack of obsequiousness to his detractors.

This hostility and animosity toward this president is, in fact, larger than this president. This is about systems of power and the power of symbols. Particularly, it is about preserving traditional power and destroying emerging symbols that threaten that power. This president is simply the embodiment of the threat, as far as his detractors are concerned, whether they are willing or able to articulate it as such.

A Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll last week found that the public "wants immigration policy along the lines of what President Barack Obama seeks but is skeptical of the executive action." When The Journal looked at some of the people who "say they want to see a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants - which is beyond what Mr. Obama's executive order would do - but say they disapprove of presidential executive action," it found that the group was "overwhelmingly white and more likely to be Republican than not" and some said that they simply "don't like anything associated with the

president."

Pay attention to the overall response from all sources, particularly the rhetoric in which it is wrapped.

Speaker John Boehner has accused Obama of acting like a "king" and an "emperor." Rep. Louie Gohmert referred to Obama's "new royal amnesty decree."

Andrew C. McCarthy, in National Review, went further, suggesting that Obama's legal justification was a slippery slope to all manner of crime and vice:

"Can the president make fraud and theft legal? How about assault? Cocaine use? Perjury? You'd have to conclude he can - and that we have supplanted the Constitution with a monarchy - if you buy President Obama's warped notion of prosecutorial discretion."

There is no denying the insinuations in such language: a fear of subjugation by people like this president, an "other" person, predisposed to lawlessness. As usual, issue-oriented opposition overlaps with a historical undercurrent, one desperate for demonstration (of liberal folly) and preservation (of conservative principles and traditional power). From this worldview, liberalism isn't simply an alternate political sensibility, but a rot, an irreparable ruin, a violation of the laws of the land as the Founding Fathers (most of whom owned slaves at some point) envisioned, but also of the laws of nature, which they see as being directed by God. There are so many examples of this: opposition to LGBT rights, to the science undergirding climate change and efforts to arrest that change, and to allowing women a full range of reproductive options.

Maybe that's why the president cited Scripture when laying out his immigration plan: "Scripture tells us that we shall not oppress a stranger, for we know the heart of a stranger -

we were strangers once, too." But that is surely to have fallen on deaf ears, if not hostile ones. Conservatives slammed the usage and Mike Huckabee went so far as to accuse the president of trying to rewrite the Bible while bizarrely invoking the Bill Cosby sexual assault allegations:

"I always thought that Scripture was eternal and unchanging, but apparently, now that Obama is president, Scripture gets rewritten more often than Bill Cosby's Wikipedia entry."

How dare the president - seen by some as a threat to Christianity - invoke Christianity in his defense!

As Paul Ryan put it in 2012, the president's policies put us on a "dangerous path," one that "grows government, restricts freedom and liberty, and compromises those values, those Judeo-Christian, Western civilization values that made us such a great and exceptional nation in the first place."

Sen. Tom Coburn upped the rhetoric last week, suggesting to USA Today that there could be a violent reaction to the president's actions:

"You're going to see - hopefully not - but you could see instances of anarchy."

He added, "You could see violence."

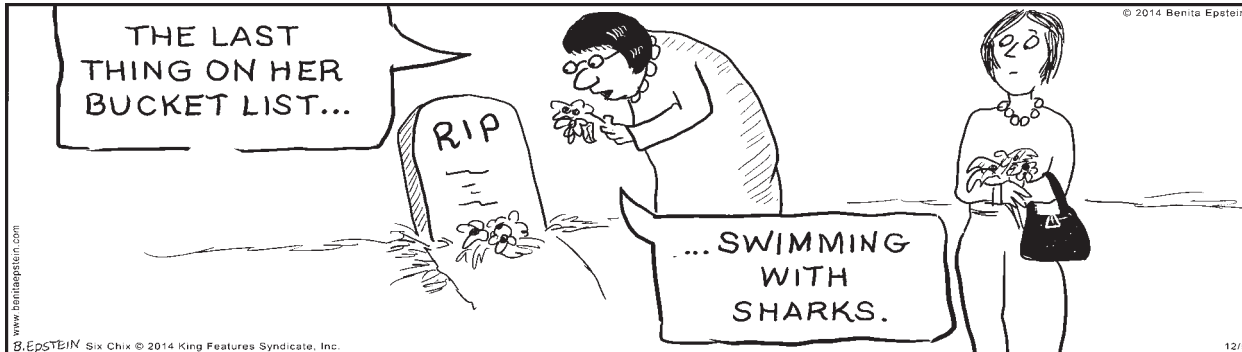
This is not completely unlike the language used by the newly elected Iowa senator, Joni Ernst, who spoke during a 2012 NRA event of her gun and the "right to defend myself," possibly "from the government, should they decide that my rights are no longer important."

Make no mistake: This debate is not just about this president, this executive order or immigration. This is about the fear that makes the face flush when people stare into a future in which traditional power - their power - is eroded, and about their desperate, by-any-means determination to deny that future. □

Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

				7				4
5			6		4			
		9		2				
	7		9	3		2	4	
	8						5	
	9	4		8	1		7	
				9		3		
			2		7			1
6				5				

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/05

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

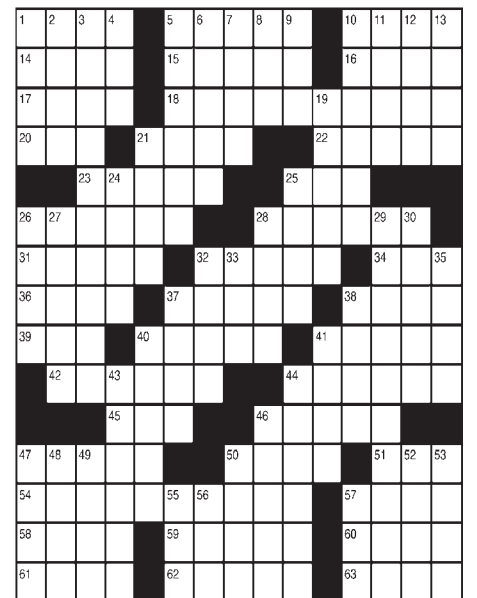
6	7	3	4	2	8	1	9	5
5	2	8	1	9	6	4	7	3
4	1	9	3	5	7	6	8	2
2	9	4	6	7	1	3	5	8
1	5	7	2	8	3	9	4	6
8	3	6	9	4	5	2	1	7
3	4	5	7	1	2	8	6	9
9	8	2	5	6	4	7	3	1
7	6	1	8	3	9	5	2	4

ACROSS

- Theater box
- Spend entirely
- Slightly open
- Not yet up
- Jet or glider
- African nation
- Griffey, Sr., and Griffey, Jr.
- College sisterhoods
- Needle's hole
- Tiny pieces
- Travis or Quaid
- "All __ lead to Rome"
- Late comedian Bernie __
- Baby's bed
- __ and thither; in all directions
- Lubricated
- Deceitfulness
- Was introduced to
- "...will be done on earth as __ in heaven..."
- Think the __ of; regard highly
- Actress Wynter
- Felt hat with a tassel
- Signified
- End-of-semester exam
- First, __, third...
- Closed loop
- Long-tailed rodent
- __-frutti
- Coil of yarn
- Youths
- Lemon meringue __
- Modest
- Taverns
- Mr. Arnaz
- Burn slightly
- Resting upon
- Collections
- Praise
- Refuse to face the reality of

DOWN

- Geneva or Erie
- Follow orders



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

12/5/14

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

3	Make sweeping assumptions	35	Story	47	Soap lather
4	Ames & Asner	37	__ away; left	48	Patella's place
5	Pineapple __-down cake	38	Soil	49	Vane direction
6	Casino machines, for short	40	Complains	50	Dryer residue
7	All __; listening	41	__ to a T; is just right	52	Press clothes
8	Name for a candy bar	43	Emergency	53	Notice
9	__ person; apiece	44	Thick stick	55	Do drugs
10	Hook on	46	Ballroom dance	56	Jumble
11	Become a member of			57	__ blood; ill will
12	Elderly				
13	Promising				
19	Furious				
21	Shiny on top?				
24	Elegant poems				
25	Not at all spicy				
26	Hairdo				
27	Ceremonies				
28	Sword handle				
29	Set free				
30	Of the kidneys				
32	Incite, spur on				
33	Fancy vase				

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12/5/14

Uber sets up mobile development team in Amsterdam, Netherlands

TOBY STERLING
Associated Press

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Uber, the San Francisco-based ride sharing company, has set up a mobile phone software development team in Amsterdam, its international headquarters. In a telephone interview Conrad Whelan — Uber's second employee and first engineer — said Thursday he has begun working with a team of 10 Dutch mobile software experts immediately and hopes to expand that number to 30 or 40 in the coming year.

Whelan said one of the reasons to choose Amsterdam is that it will allow the company to draw staff from "across Europe."

"I think the biggest reason is just the combination of design and engineering talent that you have access to here," he said.

U.S. technology companies frequently complain of how difficult it is to obtain U.S. visas for top foreign engineers, and Uber must compete with Silicon Valley giants Google and Facebook when hiring staff.

Still, Uber's core development will remain in San Francisco, Whelan said.

There are other reasons why Uber chose Amsterdam. Although the arrival of the company — whose service aims to offer a cheaper way of matching drivers and riders than tra-

ditional taxi companies — has been met with protests in many European capitals, reaction has been muted in Amsterdam.

That's in part because the company initially limited drivers to licensed chauffeurs. When Uber opened its service to all drivers in October, the transportation minister intervened to block it — a decision that's under appeal.

Regardless of the outcome, the Netherlands is already reviewing its relatively liberal taxi laws. Meanwhile, the country in general and Amsterdam in particular are attempting to profile themselves as welcoming to technology startups.

A nationwide law allowing work visas for non-Europeans who found startups is expected to go into effect Jan. 1.

Uber has come under scrutiny in recent weeks after a top executive suggested spending \$1 million to dig up dirt on a journalist that has written about the company. Uber has received coverage critical of its corporate culture and the alleged behavior of some of its drivers.

One driver was charged in San Francisco with assaulting a customer in June and the company is investigating one of its New York employees for tracking another journalist while who was using Uber. □

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Oceanfront \$14,500k
3 BEDRM OV \$17k

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U.N. weather agency: 2014 on track for hottest year

KARL RITTER

Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — With temperature data showing 2014 currently tied for the hottest year on record, the U.N. weather agency on Wednesday rejected claims that global warming has paused. The World Meteorological Organization said the global average temperature in January-October was 0.57 Celsius (1.03 Fahrenheit) above average, the same as in record hot year 2010.

The ocean temperature set a new record in the nine-month period, while land temperatures were the fourth or fifth highest since record-keeping began in the 19th century, the WMO said in a report released at U.N. climate talks in Lima and at its headquarters in Geneva. "The provisional information for 2014 means that 14 of the 15 warmest years on record have all occurred in the 21st century," WMO Secretary-General Michel Jarraud said in a statement. "There is no standstill in global warming."

Climate skeptics point to a perceived hiatus in the temperature rise since 1998, an exceptionally hot year, to support their claims that man-made warming is not a big problem. Most climate scientists reject that idea. Michael Oppenheimer of Princeton University said the long-term warming trend is combined with natural variations that tend to be cyclical, with a period of lower-than-average warming followed by a period of rapid warming.

"Whether such a period is about to begin, we cannot say but the warm 2014 is a reminder that the warming never stopped and the long term trend is up, up, up," Oppenheimer said.

Parts of the planet were cooler than average, including large areas of the U.S., Canada and

were particularly high in the northern hemisphere from June to October.

"Around 93 percent of the excess energy trapped in the atmosphere by greenhouse gases from fossil fuels and other human activities ends up in the oceans. Therefore, the heat content of the oceans is key to under-

By Nov. 13 there had been 72 tropical storms, well below the average of 89.

Arctic sea ice shrunk to the sixth lowest level on record in September, while Antarctic sea ice grew to a record extent for the third straight year. The concentration in the atmosphere of carbon di-

groundwork for a global emissions pact that's planned to be adopted next year. Divisions between rich and poor countries have slowed the negotiations over the years, but a U.S.-China emissions deal last month has injected new hope into the talks.

U.N. climate chief Chris-



The Huascaran glacier is seen in the Huascaran National Park in Huaraz, Peru, Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2014.

Associated Press

central Russia. But most of the world experienced temperatures above average, with heat waves in South Africa, Australia and Argentina in January and in large parts of South America in October, according to the WMO assessment, which was based on two global data sets from the U.S. and one from Europe.

Ocean temperatures

standing the climate system," the WMO said.

While scientists are now 95 percent certain that the temperature rise since the middle of the 20th century is mostly man-made, they can't say with the same confidence how the warming affects different parts of the climate system, including the frequency of tropical storms or hurricanes.

oxide, a key greenhouse gas, rose to a new high of 396 parts per million last year, the WMO said, 42 percent above the level before the industrial revolution, when people started burning fossil fuels for energy.

Figures for 2014 were not yet ready.

In Lima, delegates from more than 190 countries are trying to lay the

tiana Figueres said temperature data added urgency to the talks, but noted that you don't have to be a scientist to realize that the climate is changing.

"Every single one of us can just look out the window, open the door and see the effects of climate change," she said. "Because there is not one country that is exempt." □

Chris Rock on THR essay; NY grand jury decision



Actor/director Chris Rock attends the premiere of "Top Five" at the Ziegfeld Theatre on Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2014, in New York. Associated Press

JOHN CARUCCI
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — At the premiere of his new film, "Top Five," Chris Rock talked about his recent essay about race in Hollywood.

The 49-year-old star doesn't see the essay as a courageous act; rather that he was stating the facts about being black in the entertainment industry. In the essay in The Hollywood Reporter, Rock questions how a "liberal town" like Hollywood is also "kind of racist" when it comes to hiring practices and diversity. He called Hollywood "a white industry. Just as the NBA is a black industry."

Rock told The Associated Press on Wednesday night he was merely speaking from the heart.

"I don't look at it as even being political. I'm just stating the facts. I'm not trying to be political at all, that's (Jon) Stewart, that's (Bill) Maher, that's, you know, not me," Rock said.

Rock also reacted to Wednesday's grand jury decision in New York not to indict a white police officer in the chokehold death of a black Staten Island man last summer. That alterca-

tion was captured on video with the suspect screaming, "I can't breathe." "It's sad when something is on videotape. It's sad," Rock said. □

Jimmy Fallon to take third day of paternity leave

NEW YORK (AP) — Jimmy Fallon plans to take a third day of paternity leave from his "Tonight Show" duties. NBC says it will air a repeat "Tonight Show" episode Friday so Fallon can spend another day with his new daughter, Frances Cole Fallon.

The scheduled Wednesday and Thursday "Tonight" tapings had already been canceled after her arrival Wednesday morning.

Little Frances joins big sister Winnie Rose, 1. Both daughters were born to Fallon and wife, Nancy, via a surrogate.

Fallon, who took over hosting "The Tonight Show" last February, has a book deal for a children's picture book, "Your Baby's



Actors from left, Ben Whishaw, Naomie Harris, Daniel Craig and Ralph Fiennes pose for photographers at the announcement for the new Bond film, the 24th in the series, at Pinewood Studios in west London, Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014. The title of the new Bond production is Spectre.

Associated Press

Next Bond film gets retro name: 'SPECTRE'

JILL LAWLESS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — James Bond is back, in a new film with a retro title that evokes the series' past. The next 007 adventure will be called "SPECTRE," the das-

tardly fictional terrorist organization featured in "Dr. No" and other early Bond films. Director Sam Mendes announced the name of the 24th official Bond movie Thursday at Pinewood Studios near London, along with the identity of several new cast members and a new version of Bond's iconic Aston Martin car.

Academy Award-winning Austrian actor Christoph Waltz and wrestling star David Bautista are joining the cast, while Andrew Scott — master criminal Moriarty in BBC series "Sherlock" — will play an MI6 officer. Monica Bellucci and Lea Seydoux are the new "Bond girls," Lucia Sciarra and Madeleine Swann. Mendes, who directed the last Bond installment, "Skyfall," said the movie would have "everything you would expect from a Bond movie," with "a little more variety ... maybe a little more mischief."

"SPECTRE" will be Daniel Craig's fourth film as the suave spy. Returning cast members include Ralph Fiennes as spy chief M, Ben Whishaw as gadget-master Q and Naomi Harris as secretary Miss Money Penny.

Producers said the next film centers on "a cryptic message from Bond's past (that) sends him on a trail

to uncover a sinister organization."

SPECTRE — Special Executive for Counterintelligence, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion — was the terrorist organization headed by Ernst Blofeld that featured in several early Bond films.

Waltz, an Oscar winner for "Inglourious Basterds" and "Django Unchained," said his character is called Oberhauser — but fans hope he is really Blofeld, one of the most enduring Bond villains.

The cat-stroking evildoer, played by actors including Donald Pleasence and Charles Gray, hasn't appeared for several decades because of a legal dispute over rights to the character. The case was settled last year.

Mendes also revealed that Bond will drive an Aston Martin DB10, replacing the vintage DB5 that was spectacularly destroyed in "Skyfall." Initial fan reaction to the details was enthusiastic.

"For Bond fans, this is the best Christmas present — the return of James Bond and classic elements of the series with yet another classic title coined by Ian Fleming," said Ajay Chowdhury of the James Bond International Fan Club. □



In this April 23, 2013 file photo, Talk show host Jimmy Fallon and wife Nancy Juvonen attend the TIME 100 Gala celebrating the "100 Most Influential People in the World" at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York.

Associated Press

First Word Will Be Dada," scheduled for release in June. □

Medellin now known for holiday lights, not drugs

BETH J. HARPAZ
AP Travel Editor

MEDELLIN, Colombia (AP)
— Medellin for Christmas vacation? Si, si!

The city once wracked by drug violence has undergone massive social and economic transformation, and it's now known in tourist circles for spectacular Christmas light displays that veil churches, buildings, parks and even the Medellin River with glittering cascades of color.

The spectacle can be seen in neighborhoods around the city every night through Jan. 12 from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. It draws an estimated 4 million visitors, including thousands of tourists. The scene feels like a carnival, with crowds of families on foot gazing in awe, street vendors and long lines of cars and tour buses streaming slowly by.

The displays change each year and are created by EPM, a state utility company that derives much of its power from hydroelectric sources. The company, which also produces light displays in the Colombian cities of Cali and Quimbaya, held an open call for ideas for the light shows, resulting this year in more than 1,500 suggestions. The lights can be seen pri-



In this Monday, Dec. 1, 2014 photo, Christmas lights are displayed along the Medellin river, in Medellin, Colombia. The city once wracked by drug violence has undergone massive social and economic transformation, and it's now known in tourist circles for spectacular Christmas light displays that veil churches, buildings, parks and even the Medellin River with glittering cascades of color.

marily in eight areas of the city: Cerro Nutibara, La Playa Avenue, East Avenue, Carabobo, San Juan, Junin, 70 North Street and Las Palmas. Each area's display has a different theme, for example animals, symbols of peace, flowers and Christmas trees.

Locals are quick to remind visitors that perceptions of the city as a center of drug violence are outdated. Af-

ter all, Colombia's most notorious outlaw, drug kingpin Pablo Escobar, was assassinated more than 20 years ago. While it's possible to find tour guides offering "Escobar tours" of Medellin that include a stop at the building where he was ambushed by police, tour guide Andres Munera prefers to focus on more positive themes, from the Christmas lights to excursions to

nearby coffee farms and nature reserves.

Munera, 43, a native of Medellin, started his business, Land Venture Travel, in 2010, and says about 50 percent of his customers are American. After all, "it's just a three-hour flight from Miami," he said. He credits Alvaro Uribe, who served both as Colombia's president and Medellin's mayor, with helping change Co-

lombia's reputation, and says life in Medellin has been transformed by everything from libraries and parks to assistance for entrepreneurs.

Despite economic and social strides in Medellin and elsewhere, challenges remain. Medellin has recently been in the news over reports of underage prostitution, and the taxi industry in the capital, Bogota, is plagued by robberies.

But tourism is on the rise. In 2013, about 1.7 million tourists visited Colombia, more than three times the number that visited in 2002. About 20 percent of 2013 arrivals, or 343,891, were from the U.S., up slightly from the previous year. Tourism from the U.S. is expected to grow with the recent addition of direct flights on Avianca from New York.

Munera says the improved quality of life, along with social media and word of mouth, is helping persuade tourists to visit. "We don't do Pablo Escobar tours because that evil man was the worst thing that has ever happened to Medellin and the entire country," Munera said. "We prefer to focus on the positive present than on a painful past." □

Associated Press

Sundance Film Festival announces competition films

SANDY COHEN

AP Entertainment Writer
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Films

in next month's Sundance Film Festival's competitive categories feature such stars as Sarah Silverman, Michael Fassbender, Chris Pine, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Nicole Kidman.

Festival organizers revealed the slate of films Wednesday by American and international directors that will be in competition at the independent-film showcase, which runs Jan. 22-31.

Silverman shows her dramatic side as a mom falling apart in the U.S. film "I Smile Back." Fassbender appears in a drama from New Zealand called "Slow



This photo provided by courtesy of the Sundance Institute shows, Joseph Fiennes, left, and Nicole Kidman, in a scene from Parker Pictures Productions presents "Strangerland" a film by Kim Farrant. Films in the 2015 Sundance Film Festival's competitive categories feature such stars as Sarah Silverman, Michael Fassbender, Chris Pine, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Kidman. Festival organizers revealed the slate of films Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2014, by American and international directors that will be in competition at the independent-film showcase in January 2015.

Associated Press

West." Ejiofor and Pine share the screen in the American tale "Z for Zachariah." Kidman stars in the Australian film "Strangerland," set to play on the festival's opening day.

Other familiar faces among the 16 narrative films in the U.S. competition include Jack Black, Saoirse Ronan, Cobie Smulders, Cynthia Nixon and Alexander Skarsgard.

"There's a real intensity that is permeating independent filmmaking these days," said festival director John Cooper. "Whether it's the pure entertainment, the comedies and romances being so engaging; whether it's documentaries that will enrage you and sometimes call to ac-

tion. Even in the deep dramatic films, we've found there's a real concerted effort to look at empathy for dark subjects and the characters in them."

American documentaries in competition explore such subjects as the amateur porn industry, Mexican drug cartels, endangered animals,

Evel Knievel and the 2012 shooting of unarmed black teenager Jordan Russell Davis.

Cooper said he expects viewers are "going to have a very wild ride of emotional extremes."

Films that compete at the Sundance Film Festival are world premieres but may not reach local theaters for months. □

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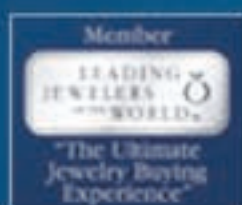
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